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Biden Announces Indictment of Sussex Developers for Racketeering and Theft

Georgetown – Attorney General Beau Biden announced today that his office has secured a criminal indictment for racketeering and theft against the owners of Circle J Builders for activities related to two Sussex County housing communities the company developed.

An investigation by the Attorney General's office that led to this week's indictment revealed that Laurel residents Robin James, age 58, and Pamela James, age 57, defrauded County Bank in securing more than \$10 million dollars in construction loans, failed to pay numerous contractors, and misappropriated deposits paid by homebuyers for residences in the Village of Cinderberry and Canal Woods communities in Sussex County. The indictment charges Robin James with 49 counts including one count of Racketeering, one count of Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering, four counts of Theft Against a Senior, four counts of Theft over \$100,000, one count of Theft over \$50,000, one count of Attempted Theft, four counts of Forgery, and 33 counts of Unlawful Retention of Funds by a Contractor. Pamela James is charged with 12 counts including one count of Racketeering, one count of Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering, four counts of Theft Against a Senior, four counts of Theft over \$100,000, one count of Theft over \$50,000, and one count of Attempted Theft.

"Fraud can devastate all of us, from a family trying to build a new home to a financial institution investing in the community. We're acting to ensure that everyone plays by the rules and obeys the law," said Attorney General Biden.

The Attorney General's Consumer Protection Unit opened its investigation of Circle J in July 2010 after receiving a complaint from a homebuyer. The investigation revealed that in order to secure construction loans the defendants falsified paperwork by fraudulently claiming that they paid contractors for completed work. The investigation also uncovered that the defendants misappropriated deposits from nine homebuyers, including seven from the Village of Cinderberry and two from Canal Woods, each ranging from \$15,000 to more than \$200,000. Though portions of these homes were constructed, seven homes have not been completed. County Bank ultimately foreclosed on the loans that financed the developments and Circle J Builders filed for Bankruptcy in October, 2010.

Following the indictment arrest warrants were issued. Both defendants turned themselves in to Capitol Police in Georgetown yesterday afternoon. After an arraignment in Superior Court, Robin James was released on \$98,000 unsecured bond and Pamela James was released on \$24,000 unsecured bond.

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